**Assistance to Maharashtra for Kharif crop loss**

2593. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that about 35 to 40 thousand farmers in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra have been badly affected by the loss of their standing kharif crops on more than 30 thousand hectares, due to torrential rains this year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the assistance provided by the Union Government to farmers whose kharif crop has been damaged?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA) (a) to (c) The Government of Maharashtra, in their Memorandum submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs for the floods in July-August 2005, reported that approximately 5.5 lakh hectares crop area has suffered losses in the State including Vidarbha region affecting a large number of farmers.

The report of the Central Team deputed for an on the spot assessment of damage and requierment of funds was considered by the Inter Ministerial Group (IMG) and thereafter by the High Level Committee (HLC). The HLC has approved release of Rs. 697.45 crore (including Rs. 65.17 crore for agriculture sector) from National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) subject to the adjustment of the 75% of the balances in Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) account in the States for the instant calamity and adhoc releases made from the NCCF.

**Assistance to J&K for agriculture production**

2594. SHRI T.S. BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased
to state:

(a) whether Government propose to grant special status to J&K to increase its agricultural production;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the steps taken by Government for promoting agriculture to improve the condition of farmers in the State; and